

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-05 OMB-01

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

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INFO USMISSION NATO

SECDEF WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

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USCINCEUR

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CINCUSAREUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 33619

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, PFOR, FR

SUBJECT: USAF USE OF SUIPPES RANGE

1. SUMMARY: FRENCH HAVE INFORMED US THAT SUIPPES RANGE WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR U.S. USE AFTER 1976. WE HAVE ASKED FOR REVIEW OF FRENCH DECISION. END SUMMARY.

2. FOR MANY YEARS, U.S. AIR FORCES IN EUROPE HAVE USED SUIPPES RANGE IN NORTHEASTERN FRANCE FOR TRAINING PURPOSES, INCLUDING AIR-TO-GROUND WEAPONS PRACTICE. U.S. USE OF SUIPPES RANGE HAS BEEN GRANTED BY GOF ON YEAR-TO-YEAR BASIS. ON DECEMBER 17, WE RECEIVED FRENCH RESPONSE TO OUR REQUEST FOR U.S. ARMY, NAVY, MARINE AND AIR FORCE USE OF VARIOUS FRENCH TRAINING  
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FACILITIES IN 1976. INCLUDED IN THIS FRENCH RESPONSE

WAS PERMISSION FOR USE OF SUIOPES IN CALENDAR 1976. HOWEVER, COVERING NOTE FROM FRENCH STATED THAT BEGINNING IN 1977, U.S. AIR FORCES COULD NO LONGER USE SUIPPES RANGE BECAUSE OF NEEDS OF FRENCH AIR FORCE FOR AIR-TO-GROUND FIRING THERE FOR TRAINING PURPOSES.

3. WE RAISED ISSUE WITH JACQUES MARTIN (DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL OF NATIONAL DEFENSE) DECEMBER 19, NOTING THAT WE LOOK ON BILATERAL ARRANGEMENT FOR USAF USE OF SUIPPES RANGE AS EXAMPLE OF PRAGMATIC FRANCO-AMERICAN POLITICAL/MILITARY COOPERATION THAT HAS CONTINUED NOTWITHSTANDING FRANCE'S 1966 DECISION TO QUIT NATO'S INTEGRATED MILITARY COMMAND STRUCTURE. WE ADDED THAT ACCESS TO ADEQUATE TRAINING FACILITIES BY US FORCES IN EUROPE WAS A GROWING PROBLEM AND LOSS OF SUIPPES RANGE WOULD AGGRAVATE THIS PROBLEM. WE ASKED THAT FRENCH RECONSIDER APPARENT INTENTION TO CLOSE SUIPPES TO US AFTER NEXT YEAR.

4. MARTIN CLAIMED HE WAS NOT FAMILIAR WITH FRENCH DECISION TO CLOSE SUIPPES TO US IN 1977. TAKING NOTE OF OUR ARGUMENTS, HE UNDERTOOK TO LOOK INTO SITUATION AND GIVE US MORE INFORMATION. IN MEANTIME, HE GAVE US FOLLOWING GENERAL OBSERVATIONS. FRENCH ARE ALSO IN A BIND FOR ADEQUATE TRAINING FACILITIES. GROWING USE OF HELICOPTER-LAUNCHED HOT MISSILE IS CASE IN POINT. SUIPPES IS ONE OF BEST--PERHAPS ONLY--FRENCH FIRING RANGE COVERING SUFFICIENT TERRITORY TO HANDLE HOT. FRENCH WILL ALSO NEED GREATER USE OF SUIPPES FOR THEIR JAGUAR TACTICAL AIRCRAFT. MARTIN SAID THAT SUIPPES IS ALREADY SO HEAVILY USED BY FRENCH, US, FRG AND CANADIANS THAT ANY ADDITIONAL USE BY FRENCH (E.G. HOT AND JAGUAR TRAINING) PROBABLY WILL REQUIRE CUT BACK IN USE BY OTHERS. HE NOTED THAT SPECIAL CANADIAN REQUEST FOR SUIPPES USE IN PAST YEAR HAD BEEN ACCOMMODATED ONLY AFTER DIFFICULT JUGGLING OF SCHEDULE, A PROCESS WHICH UNDERLINED GROWING DIFFICULTY IN ALLOCATING TIME AT SUIPPES TO MORE FRENCH USE.

5. FRENCH AIR FORCE SUBSEQUENTLY INFORMALLY INFORMED AIRA THAT  
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SUIPPES RANGE WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR U.S. USE AFTER 1976, BUT PROBABLY AT A REDUCED LEVEL. FAF OFFICIALS STATED THAT THEY HAVE BEEN FORCED TO CLOSE THE RANGES AT SOLENZARA AND CAZAUX DURING THE MONTHS OF JULY AND AUGUST AND POSSIBLY SEPTEMBER. AS A RESULT OF THESE CLOSURES, WHICH BEGIN IN 1976, FAF WILL INCREASE USE OF SUIPPES IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN CURRENT TRAINING LEVELS, AND MUST CONSEQUENTLY DECREASE USE BY FOREIGN AIRCRAFT.

THUS USE OF SUIPPES BY U.S. AIRCRAFT IN 1977 WILL BE  
SOMEWHAT REDUCED, WITH LEVEL OF THIS REDUCTION AS WELL  
AS REDUCTION IN SUBSEQUENT YEARS, OPEN TO NEGOTIATION.

6. COMMENT: EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE TO PUSH THROUGH  
DIPLOMATIC AND MILITARY CHANNELS HERE TO ASSURE CON-  
TINUED USE OF SUIPPES IN 1977 AND BEYOND.  
GAMON

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** MILITARY TRAINING, AIR FORCE, TEST FACILITIES, MILITARY BASE CLOSINGS, MILITARY BASE AGREEMENTS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 24 DEC 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** greeneet  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975PARIS33619  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Line Count:** 123  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** greeneet  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 27 MAY 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <27 MAY 2003 by WorrelSW>; APPROVED <06 OCT 2003 by greeneet>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** USAF USE OF SUIPPES RANGE  
**TAGS:** MARR, PFOR, FR, US, USAF  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006